

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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SUBJECT: ISRAELI REACTION TO ALLEGATIONS OF SINAI II
VIOLATIONS

REF: (A) CAIRO 11082, (B) CAIRO 11166

1. MEDIA REACTION HERE TO REPORTED EGYPTIAN VIOLATION OF THE INTERIM AGREEMENT HAS BEEN MIXED. SOME COMMENTATORS HAVE ACCEPTED GOVERNMENT EXPLANATIONS OF "TECHNICAL VIOLATIONS." FOR EXAMPLE, A TELEVISION COMMENTATOR SAID AUGUST 17 "...IT CANNOT BE SIAD THAT EGYPT IS REJECTING THE AGREEMENT EITHER IN LETTER OR IN SPIRIT." HOWEVER, OTHER COMMENTATORS CRITICIZED THE GOVERNMENT FOR DISREGARDING THE VIOLATIONS AND WARNED OF POSSIBLE FUTURE DANGERS FOR ISRAEL IF THE VIOLATIONS CONTINUED TO BE IGNORED. FOR EXAMPLE, MA'ARIV WROTE ON AUGUST 16 THAT THE EGYPTIONA "HAVE PLANS WHICH THEY CARRY OUT EVEN WHEN IT MENAS A FLAGRANT VIOLATION OF THE SPIRIT AND LETTER OF THE DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT." MA'ARIV FOLLOWED UP ON AUGUST 18 WITH A CALL FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A "RED LINE" IN THE SINAI.

2. FORMER GENERAL ARIK SHARON USED THIS SUBJECT AS AN
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OPPORTUNITY TO CRITICIZE THE GOVERNMENT ON TWO RECENT

OCCASIONS. ON AUGUST 16 SHARON CLAIMED IN A SPEECH THAT ISRAEL HAD NOT REACTED PROPERLY "TO THE GRAVE VIOLATIONS OF THE INTERIM AGREEMENT...IT IS ACCEPTED THAT SINAI SHOULD BE A DEMILITARIZED SONE BETWEEN US AND THE ARABS. HOWEVER, WE SEE THE OPPOSITE; WHENEVER WE STEP BACK, THE EGYPTIANS STEP IN." HE REPEATED HIS CHARGES IN A SPEECH TO STUDENTS IN HAIFA AUGUST 18.

3. SHARON'S CHARGES FOLLOWED STATEMENTS BY RABIN AND PERES ON AUGUST 15. AT THAT TIME RABIN SAID THERE HAD BEEN NO "SIGNIFICANT VIOLATIONS OF THE INTERIM AGREEMENT" AND PERES SAID THAT "THE ATMOSPHERE OF THE IMPLEMENTATION IS POSITIVE EVEN THOUGH THERE ARE OCCASIONAL TECHNICAL VIOLATIONS." ON AUGUST 19, FOLLOWING HIS MEETING WITH SIILASVUO, PERES SAID THAT ONLY ONE OF THE REPORTED VIOLATIONS REMAINS UNCORRECTED -- THAT OF THE EXCESSIVE NUMBER OF BATTALIONS IN THE LIMITED ZONE -- AND THAT ISRAEL HAS ASKED SIILASVUO TO TAKE UP THIS QUESTION AGAIN WITH THE EGYPTIANS.

4. IN REPLY TO A JOURNALIST'S QUESTION AS TO WHETHER HE CONSIDERED THE VIOLATIONS TO BE "TECHNICAL," PERES SAID: "WELL, THE AGREEMENT HAS WIDE POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS AND THERE ARE THEMES THAT WERE NOT PUT IN THE AGREEMENT. THE AGREEMENT WAS SUPPOSED TO CREATE A NEW SITUATION IN THE SINAI PENINSULA BY REDUCING MILITARY TENSION AND ESCALATING CIVILIAN ACTIVITIES AND DEVELOPMENT. BY AND LARGE I BELIEVE THIS CHANGE WAS ACHIEVED WITH THE COOPERATION OF ALL PARTIES CONCERNED. YET THIS DOES NOT MEAN WE DON'T HAVE TO MAINTAIN A VERY STRICT OBSERVATION OF THE AGREEMENT. BY AND LARGE, THE POLITICAL AIM OF THE AGREEMENT WAS ACHIEVED, AND CONTINUES TO BE SUSTAENED. WE SHALL HAVE TO WORK OUT THE OTHER DETAILS."
TOON

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